Station Circular 52 Corvallis, Oregon December, 1923

Oregon Agricultural College

Experiment Station

The O. A. C. Portable Colony House

By

Alfred G. Lunn,

Poultry Husbandman

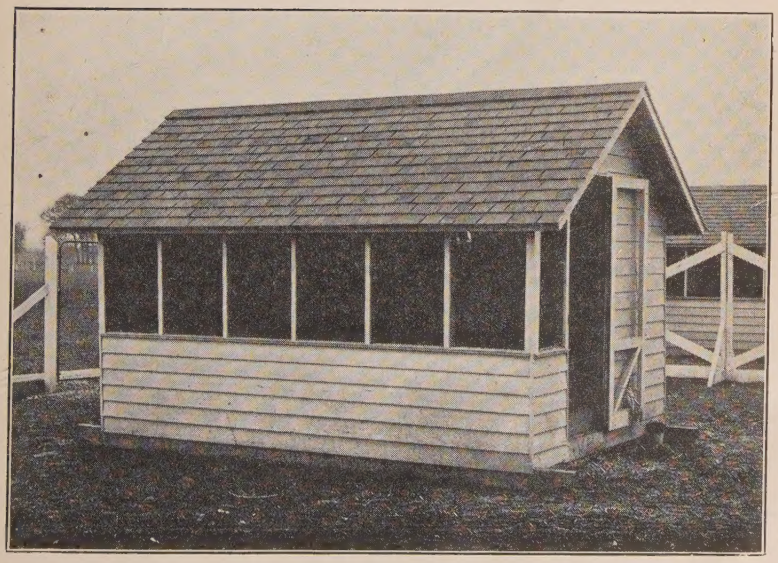
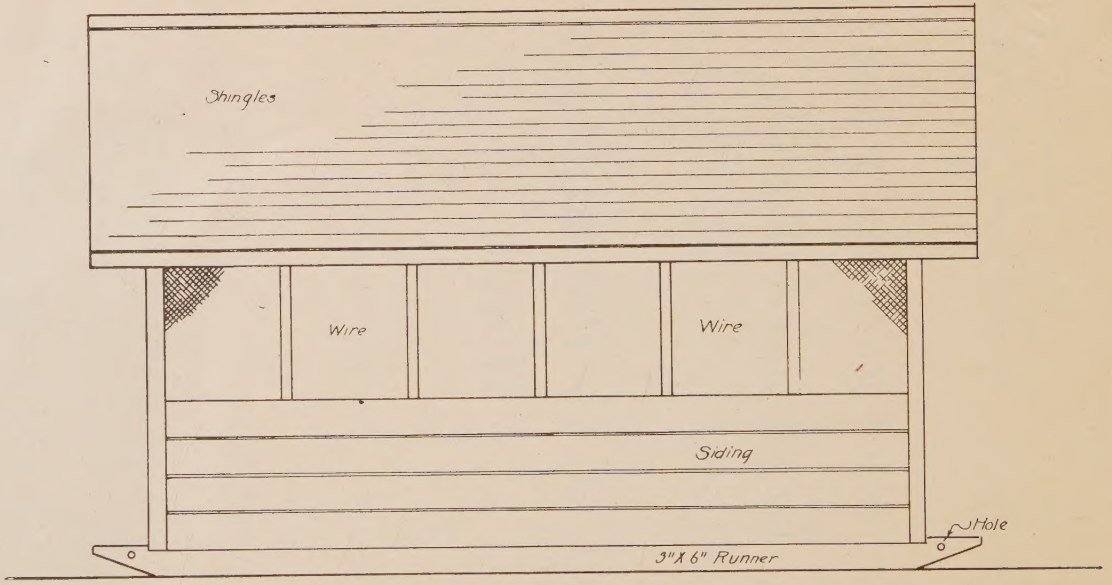
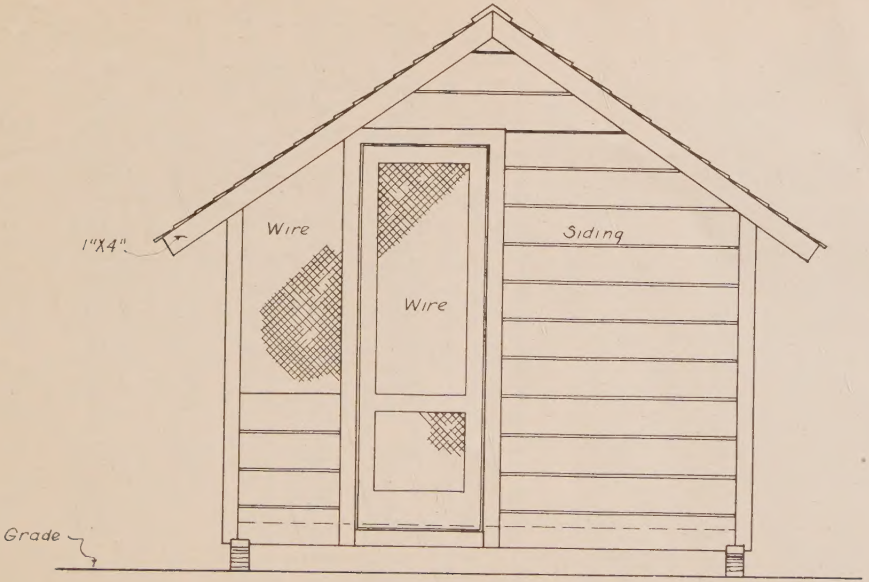


Fig. 1. The O. A. C. portable colony house.



SIDE ELEVATION

1'10" 12'0" 1'0"



END ELEVATION

The O.A.C. Portable Colony House

The portable colony house is an outgrowth of the demand for keeping fowls in small units and in keeping them on fresh, clean ground. The system fits in well with the rotation of crops upon the farm. Clean ground, free from contamination, is essential to successful poultry keeping. While it may be satisfactory under certain conditions to confine the laying stock, allowing them no range whatever, it is essential that fowls to be used for breeding purposes be given as near free range conditions as possible. Clean ground is essential to health, vigor, and vitality. With the portable colony house it is possible to keep the fowls on clean ground under conditions more nearly natural.

The portable house may be used to good advantage where it is desired to rotate the fowls about the farm. During the winter months the houses may be drawn in near the home or farm buildings so that the work in caring for the fowls may be more easily done. During the spring, summer, and fall months the houses should be rotated from place to place and the flocks given free range.

The portable colony house described in this circular has been used in the Station's breeding experiments for a number of years. It is especially well adapted to the small breeding flock.

Size of house. It has been found that a good size for a portable colony house is 8 by 12 feet. A team of horses will pull a house of this size. As part of the flock will be in the yard during the day, less floor space is required than would be necessary if the fowls were confined. Allowing three square feet of floor space per fowl the house will comfortably care for a flock of thirty hens.

Construction. In the O. A. C. portable colony house the three essentials of a successful house have been provided: (1) comfort of the fowls, (2) economy of construction, (3) strength. The house is built on runners to facilitate moving. The end sills are set in the runners one inch and are bolted to them as shown in the plan, thus giving added strength. The joists are nailed to the runners and with the floor boards nailed securely to the end sills and joists there is little chance for the house to wrack in moving.

Open front. To insure fresh air and good ventilation part of the front and end are left open. This type of colony house is used in housing the breeding flocks on the Experiment Station plant, just as it appears in the cut on the first page of the circular. For sections where severe winters prevail, a curtain covering the lower three-fourths of the open front would be an advantage. The end may be closed by tacking light muslin on the door and to the studding. An ideal curtain for the front is one that rolls up from the bottom of the opening. A curtain made of light muslin can be tacked on a roller and set in brackets or on nails. A curtain rod or stick is tacked to the other end so that the curtain may be raised to any desired height. It should never be entirely closed as this would prevent good ventilation.

Roosts. Two roosts are provided so that with thirty fowls to the house there is ample room and crowding is eliminated. Also the roosts are located far enough apart that the fowls on the back roost cannot get their heads under those in front of them. Crowded houses and crowded roosts are ideal conditions to start colds, etc. Both should be avoided.

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How to Convert the O. A. C. Portable Colony House into a Brooder House

By

Alfred G. Lunn,
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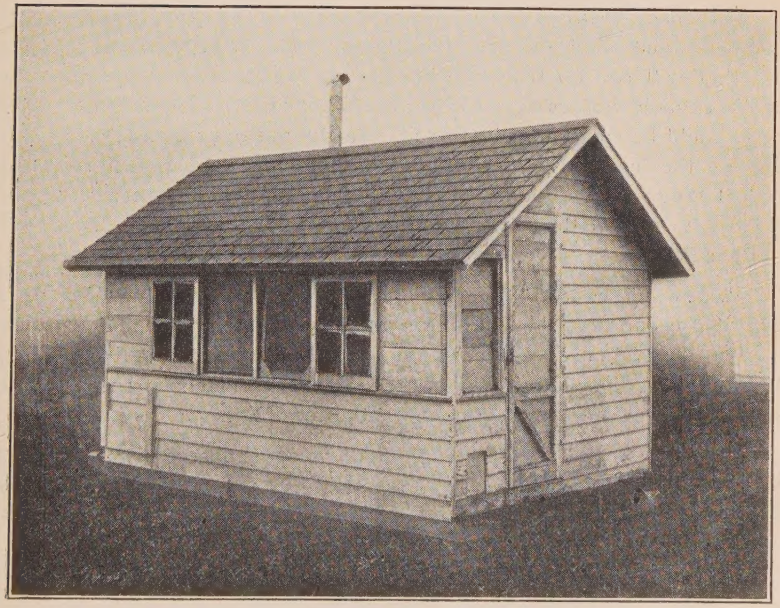


The O. A. C. Portable Colony House used as a Brooding House.

How to Convert the O.A.C. Portable Colony House into a Brooder House

It is now a recognized fact that clean ground is essential in the production of healthy, vigorous chicks. It has been found that a number of disease-producing organisms live in the soil for one or more years and that chicks running over such contaminated ground are quite likely to contract disease. It is therefore essential that clean ground be provided for the baby chicks and young growing stock.

The O. A. C. Portable Colony House, the plan and description of which appears in Experiment Station Circular 52, may easily be converted into a brooder house which will successfully care for from 300 to 350 chicks.

The colony house is built on runners so that it is easily moved from place to place and answers the requirement for clean ground.

Necessary changes. In converting the colony house into a brooder house three factors should be kept in mind: good ventilation, warmth, and light.

The space between the two center studs is left open, but as a protection against wind and storms it is advisable to provide either a curtain that will roll up from the bottom on the outside of the house, or muslin-covered frames as shown in the illustrations. If frames are used, they should be so arranged as to fit into the openings between the studding on the inside of the house. The frames should also be arranged so that they may be opened in from the top to give the desired amount of fresh air and at the same time keep the cold air from falling directly on the chicks.

Two windows (4 — 10″ x 12″ glass) cover the openings on either side of the curtain. The windows are screwed to the studding on the outside of the house. These windows will furnish ample light during the first few days, after which the curtain or muslin frames will be removed during the day time, giving additional light.

The two spaces at either end of the colony house and the openings in the door and end of the house are all boarded up. For this purpose common box shooks are used.

The dropping board is arranged far enough from the floor to insure good light under it and to be out of the way of the fowls scratching under it.

Roost, dropping board, and other equipment in the colony house, are made portable so that they may be taken out at least once each year for thorough cleaning.

Nests. Eight nests are provided, allowing one nest to each four fowls, which is ample. Too few nests mean broken and soiled eggs. The oil-can nest, made by cutting out one side and a part of the end, is quite satisfactory and is easily cleaned.

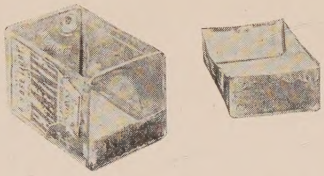


Fig. 2. Good serviceable nests may be made out of 5-gal. oil-cans. Such nests are cheap and easily cleaned. An oil-can may also be used for watering the flock.

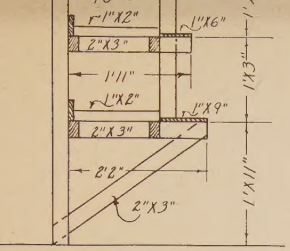
Drinking vessels. As the fowls will be out of doors the greater part of the day, it will keep the house cleaner if the drinking vessels are placed outside. Oil-cans, cut in half, are good for this purpose, but if buttermilk is fed, an earthenware crock, wooden bucket, or wooden trough should be provided, as the acid will eat the metal.

Mash hopper. For the feeding of dry mash an open box or trough has been found superior to the so called "self-feeding hopper." A box six inches deep, six inches wide, and four feet long makes a very desirable feeding box. A piece of quarter round material should be nailed on the upper edge of the inside of the box to prevent the fowls hooking the mash out with their beaks. The feed box may be placed along the front of the house, but because of the fact that the fowls will stand on the box to look out, and because of rain and fog dampening the mash, it is advisable to locate it on the end wall between the door and rear wall under the dropping board and twelve inches from the floor.

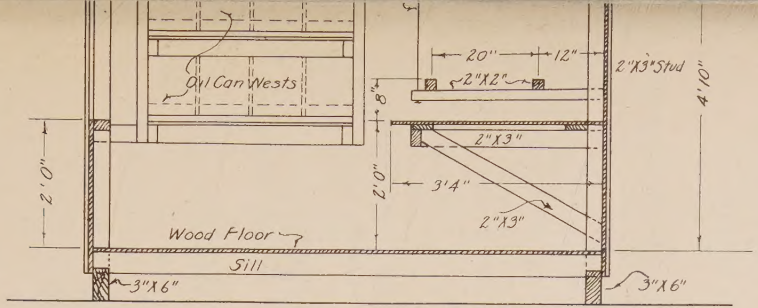
BILL OF MATERIALS FOR PORTABLE COLONY HOUSE 8′ x 12′

Lumber

2 — 3″ x 6″ x 14′ for runners
2 — 4″ x 4″ x 8′ for sills
5 — 2″ x 4″ x 8′ for sills
7 — 2″ x 3″ x 10′ for studs
2 — 2″ x 3″ x 14′ for studs
2 — 2″ x 3″ x 8′ for studs
3 — 2″ x 3″ x 12′ for plates
7 — 2″ x 3″ x 12′ for rafters
8 — 2″ x 3″ x 12′ for nest frames, etc.
2 — 2″ x 2″ x 12′ for roosts
1 — 2″ x 2″ x 10′ for roost supports
175 — board feet 1″ x 8″ (shiplap) for flooring and dropping boards
125 — board feet 1″ x 6″ for sheathing and dropping board slats
260 — board feet 8″ channel rustic siding
1250 — shingles
2 — 1″ x 4″ x 12′ for finishing corners
2 — 1″ x 3″ x 12′ for finishing corners
5 — 1″ x 3″ x 12′ for door and door frame
2 — 1″ x 4″ x 14′ for cornice at sides
2 — 1″ x 4″ x 12′ for cornice at ends
1 — 1″ x 3″ x 14′ for ridge board
1 — 1″ x 4″ x 14′ for ridge board
1 — 1″ x 2″ x 14′ for oil-can nest stops



FRAME FOR NESTS



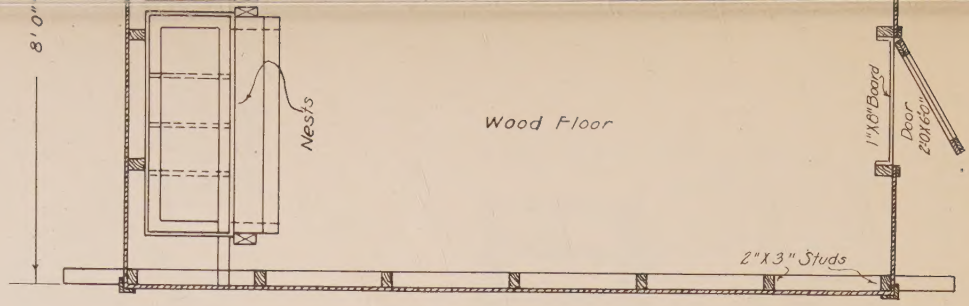
END ELEVATION - SECTION

O A C
EXPERIMENT STATION

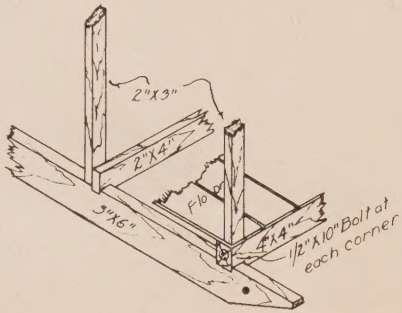
PORTABLE COLONY HOUSE

11/26/23

Drawn by: J.H. Patterson



PLAN - SECTION



DETAIL OF RUNNER ATTACMENT

Hardware

6 — lbs. 8d case nails
10 — lbs. 8d common nails
3 — lbs. 16d common nails
4 — lbs. shingle nails
1 — pr. 4″ strap hinges
6 — lin. feet of No. 14 galvanized wire for roost supports
18 — lin. feet of 36″ — 2″ mesh poultry wire for door and front
8 — 10″ x 10″ x 15″ oil-cans for nests
4 — ½″ x 10″ anchor bolts for securing sills to runners

SUMMARY

Lumber

2 — 3″ x 6″ x 14′ No. 1 common
2 — 4″ x 4″ x 8′ No. 1 common
5 — 2″ x 4″ x 8′ S4S No. 1 common
2 — 2″ x 3″ x 8′ S4S No. 1 common
7 — 2″ x 3″ x 10′ S4S No. 1 common
18 — 2″ x 3″ x 12′ S4S No. 1 common
2 — 2″ x 3″ x 12′ S4S No. 1 common
2 — 2″ x 2″ x 12′ S4S clear
1 — 2″ x 2″ x 10′ S4S clear
175 — board feet 1″ x 8″ (shiplap) No. 1 common
125 — board feet 1″ x 6″ S2S No. 1 common
260 — board feet 8″ channel rustic siding No. 2
1250 — shingles
4 — 1″ x 4″ x 12′ S2S No. 1 common
3 — 1″ x 4″ x 14′ S2S No. 1 common
7 — 1″ x 3″ x 12′ S2S No. 1 common
1 — 1″ x 3″ x 14′ S2S No. 1 common
1 — 1″ x 2″ x 14′ S4S clear

Hardware

6 lbs. 8d case nails
10 lbs. 8d common nails
3 lbs. 16d common nails
4 lbs. shingle nails
1 pr. 4″ strap hinges
6 lin. feet No. 14 galvanized wire
18 lin. feet 36″ — 2″ mesh poultry wire
8 — 10″ x 10″ x 15″ oil-cans
4 ½″ x 10″ bolts

Note: Plans for the O. A. C. Four Hundred Hen Laying House are published in Experiment Station Circular 51, which is sent free to those requesting it.